

BELGIUM

Hero & Martyr



Special Number

L'ART ET LES

ARTISTES



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LOS ANGELES









1914

" HEURE VIENDRA  
QUI TOUT PAIERA "

(Old Walloon saying).

1915

" COMETH THE DAY  
THAT ALL SHALL PAY "

# BELGIUM

## HERO AND MARTYR

### TEXTS

BY

J. MAETERLINCK

J. VERHAEREN

J. DELANNOY

PROFESSOR AND LIBRARIAN AT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN

J. DE MOT

CURATOR OF THE MUSEE DU  
CINQUANTAIRE OF BRUSSELS

L. DUMONT-  
WILDEN

J. LAMBOTTE

FINE-ARTS SECRETARY IN BELGIUM

J. NOTHOMB

J. WILMOTTE

PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIÉGE  
LECTURER AT THE SORBONNE

VISÉ  
LIÉGE  
DINANT  
TERMONDE  
LOUVAIN  
MALINES  
NIEUPOORT  
YPRES  
DIXMUDE  
FURNES  
etc., etc.

### ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

A. BAERTSOEN

F. BRANGWYN

(BORN AT BRUGES)

L. CASSEL

A. DELAUNOIS.

L. FRANK

V. GILSOUL

C. HOUSSARD

L. HUYGENS

F. WILLAERTS

AND FROM THE VIEWS OF  
TOWNS AND VILLAGES  
PHOTOGRAPHED BEFORE  
AND AFTER THE INVASION

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SPECIAL NUMBER  
OF L'ART & LES ARTISTES  
23, QUAI VOLTAIRE, 23  
PARIS

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ESTABLISHED 1864

# M. KNOEDLER & C<sup>o</sup>

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*Ph. E. Van Hammée. History of Belgium in the war of the Nations). Copyright.*

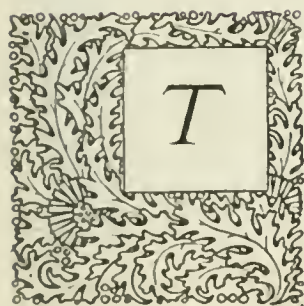
THE INTERIOR OF SAINT-MARTIN'S CATHEDRAL, YPRES



# PREFACE

*« Let Belgium die rather than honour! »  
King ALBERT to his Army,  
(September 1<sup>st</sup> 1914).*

*« Belgium is punished as no nation has ever  
been punished for having done her duty as no  
nation has ever done it. »  
Maurice MAETERLINCK.*



*HERE is not in the history of Kings a deed to be compared with that of Albert I opposing with all the pride of his courage and loyalty the shameless violation of his kingdom by the German armies; there is not in the history of mankind a rising more heroic than that of the Belgian people mustering round their sovereign to defend at the cost of their blood their very existence and the right every nation has to life and liberty. And they did so without casting a thought at the revenge the conqueror would surely take—that conqueror of a single day—and heedless of the disheartening torpor of the neutral states which, in an unpardonable fashion, forgetting the international conventions, a sacred code now destroyed, gazed at one another fearful and appalled with finger on lips.*

*The memorable example set by that kingly deed and national outburst blended in the most woeful, absolute sacrifice, shall henceforth cast its legendary beams over coming centuries kindled day by day to a still brighter light by the pious admiration of men.*

*As far as it lies in its power the review l'Art et les Artistes wishes to contribute to fix this memorable event in the minds of men, to spread abroad its influence that men may neither forget nor forgive the hateful behaviour of the German soldiers and their leaders who ordered them to plunder, rob, set fire to everything, to slaughter women*



and children, to destroy ruthlessly and uselessly the works of art and monuments of the Past. "For to forget would be to allow crime to brew in the dark and treachery to renew its guile."

The infamy of the hangman must be eternally linked in history to the nobleness of the heroic victim, to appear in the broad daylight of undeniable facts ever more hideous and despicable. Side by side with the work of art in its supreme beauty, in the fullness of its glory we must show the final downfall, desolate ruins, the dust and ashes wherein nothing remains of the creation of man's genius, the bones of the innocent victims, the cruel, triumphant brute.

Better than the most eloquent speeches, better than the most minute records whose salutary effect is sometimes impaired or cancelled by the poisonous work of cunning lies, the simple picture of crime throws over history a light that has no shadow. It is a proof that cannot be denied.

We wish to do now for Belgium hero and martyr what we have already done for the Cathedral of Reims.

From documents of an unquestionable sincerity the reader will see passing before his eyes the woeful procession of towns and villages ruined and destroyed, of country-districts pillaged and devastated, and also a few of those calm, quiet nooks peculiar to the goodly land of Flanders—so calm and quiet mirrored in the dark waters of their silent canals that gentle, mystic souls—timorous doves enamoured of solitude and meditation—sought shelter there, as in a nest of comfort and repose.

What has become of those tender abodes of prayer, ecstasy and peace?

The texts and illustrations of this special number; in which the dry precision of photographs alternate with the reproduction of works of art of the highest value, could not be intrusted to any but Belgians. Our warrant thanks are due to the writers and artists for their invaluable and precious help — each of them will contribute to the success of this melancholy and glorious collection which the review *l'Art et les Artistes* is happy and proud to dedicate to heroic Belgium and her heroic king.

ARMAND DAYOT.







VISÉ — VIEW OF THE TOWN-HALL  
(BEGINNING OF THE XVII<sup>th</sup> CENTURY) (destroyed)



*Belonging to M. Moreau.*  
BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF LIEGE (from an engraving of the XVII<sup>th</sup> century)



LIEGE — IN THE BACKGROUND, ONE OF THE FORTS COMMANDING THE TOWN



*Ph. Belgica.*

RUINS OF THE CHURCH AT VISÉ



CURTIUS'S HOUSE AT LIEGE



*Phot. N.D.*

DINANT — BIRD'S EYE VIEW TAKEN FROM MOUNT SAINT-NICOLAS





## FOR BELGIUM

**B**ELGIUM is punished as no nation has ever been punished for having done her duty as no nation has ever done it. She saved the world, although she knew that she herself could not be saved. She saved it by stemming the fierce onrush of the barbarians letting herself be trampled to death so as to give time to the defenders of justice, not to come to her help, for she well knew no help could come in time, but to summon the forces necessary to snatch the Latin civilisation from the greatest peril that has ever threatened it. Thus she rendered to this civilisation—the only one in which men are able and willing to live—exactly the same service which Greece in the days of the great Asiatic invasion had rendered to the mother of this civilisation. But if the service is the same, the doing is beyond all comparison. Search all through history you will find nothing to equal it. The splendid sacrifice of Thermopylae, which is perhaps the proudest to be found in the annals of war, shines with a light as heroic but less ideal because less disinterested and more material. Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans fought indeed for their homes, their wives and children, for the realities they had just left behind. On the contrary, king Albert and his Belgians could not but know that in barring the invader's path, they inevi-

tably sacrificed their homes, their wives and children. Far from having, as the Spartan heroes, a vital and imperious interest in fighting they had, in abstaining from fighting every thing to gain and nothing to lose—save honour. In one scale were foes, plunder, ruin and slaughter, the immense disaster we witness; in the other that small word honour fraught with immense things; but with things we do not see, at least which only the purest and greatest among us can perceive with sufficient clearness. True, here and there in history, some one man, nobler than the rest, has realized what this word means and sacrificed his life and the lives of those he loved for its sake—and we raise him to the ranks of the gods and worship him as such. But never before has a whole nation, great and small, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, deliberately offered itself up for something which cannot be seen, I assert it without fear of being contradicted however far back you may search in the memory of man.

And note, this was not one of those heroic decisions taken in an hour of enthusiasm, when man easily rises above himself and which, his rapture once forgotten, he has no longer to uphold, and he falls back again to the level of his every day life. This is a decision to be made and maintained

every morning; and it has been so now for almost four months, amidst an ever increasing distress and disaster. And this resolution has never wavered, nay it rises as misery grows and to-day it has reached its highest pitch. I have seen many of my countrymen who are now refugees; some were once rich and have lost every thing, some were poor before the war and now do not even possess what the poorest possess. I have received many letters from every corner of Europe where the exiled victims of duty have sought a moment's rest. I have found in them, as it is only too natural, some complaints, but not a single reproach, no regret, no recrimination. I have not once read these despondent but excusable words which, it seemed, might have risen so easily to desperate lips "If our king had not acted as he did we should not now be suffering as we are". They do not even think of it. It seems as if such a thought could not live in the atmosphere purified by their misfortune. They are not resigned, for to be resigned means to renounce and no longer strain our courage to every effort. They are happy and proud in their distress. They dimly feel that this distress will regenerate them as a baptism of confidence and glory and exalt them for ever in the memory of man. A breath unlooked-for, blowing from the secret stores of the race and from the heights of the human heart has of a sudden stirred their lives, blending their souls into one made of the same heroic substance as that of their great king.

They have done what has never been done before, and we must hope for the happiness of mankind that no nation will ever again be called upon

to make such a sacrifice. But this admirable example will not be lost even if there is no need to imitate it. At a time when, rendered sluggish by a well-being that has lasted too long and realities that were entirely selfish, the universal conscience was about to waver, it has raised to a higher standard, what might be called the political morals of the world and at one stroke has lifted them to a level they had never attained before and from which they can never fall; for there are deeds so wondrous, filling the memory of man in such a way, that they establish a sort of new religion, setting, once and for all, the standard of human conscience, courage and loyalty.

As I said and as history will lay it down some day, with more eloquence and authority than I have done, they have actually saved the Latin civilisation. For centuries they stood at the confluence of two powerful and hostile cultures. They had to choose between them and did not hesitate. And their choice is all the more significant and fraught with meaning because none could choose with fuller knowledge. No doubt you know that half Belgium is of German stock. She could therefore, owing to her affinity of race, understand better than another the culture offered to her with its inclusive theory of dishonour. She understood it so well, knew it so well, that she flung it from her with horror, with a passionate violence, unequalled, spontaneous, unanimous and irresistible from which there is no appeal, giving to the world a stern, peremptory lesson sealed with every drop of her blood.

Maurice MAETERLINCK.





*Ph. N.D.*

DINANT — VIEW OF THE CITADEL AND THE CHURCH OF NOTRE-DAME



*Ph. Belgica.*

DINANT — THE HIGH-STREET AFTER THE INVASION



*Ph. Paul Becker.*

*Belonging to M. Spierogel*

VICTOR GILSOUL — EVENING AT MALINES (PICTURE)



*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

THE DRAPERS' HALL AT MALINES





*Ph. Paul Becker.*

*Belonging to M. Watremez.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — NOTRE-DAME OF THE DYLE AT MALINES (PICTURE)



*Belonging to M. Jules Metotte.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — MALINES IN THE SNOW (PICTURE)



*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

THE CATHEDRAL OF MALINES BEFORE THE BOMBARDMENT



*Ph. J. Courcier*

THE CATHEDRAL OF MALINES AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT





# AMIDST THE ASHES

I do not mean the following lines to be the text of an epitaph for our cities lying prostrate on the ground. Life is smouldering under their ashes, as Spring, underlying Winter, circulates, descends and rises again close to the surface of the Earth.

Flanders and the Walloon country have known days as dark as those they are living through. Burgundy, Spain, and Austria, have gnawed and torn them to pieces in turn. They did not die. They are ever able to revive. But though Hope remains with us, and shelters from the wind the lamp of the Awakening, at the end of the avenue, true it is that the hour which is striking is strangely sorrowful and terrible.

To reduce us, Germany not only sent her men to fire but to burn. She has not contented herself with fighting against combatants; she has fought against the fruitful mother and the growing child. She wanted to destroy our whole race and strike it not only in its Future, but in its Past. Her hatred was complete.

Our Future is our Hope; it has not yet become a reality, glowing though it is with fervour and confidence. It is hidden in our souls, out of reach, unseen. Yet it is as real as our presence on Earth.

Our Past, on the contrary, may be

seen and touched. It has shaped itself in the stones of our dwellings and our monuments. Since the eleventh and twelfth centuries, we symbolise both our ideal and our faith by giving our churches the shape of the cross. We deck our temples with a pious and realistic decoration, thus to reveal our thought and its every shade. As early as the thirteenth century our civic pride asserted and strengthened itself in a thousand belfreys. They rise, towering above our private houses and public places to proclaim that this pride must raise itself above our private interest and social rivalry.

We created our nunneries to satisfy our love of meditation and silence. Our Halls whether in the hands of our fullers, our butchers or our drapers; showed our eagerness to toil, to trade, to manufacture. We made them stately and beautiful. We made masterpieces of them. All our historical life was ardent and personal. It differed from that of other nations : Twice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, through our painters we taught Art to the World. No later than yesterday, our literary School, hardly come to life, but already illustrious, shouted the names of our great writers to listening Fame. Europe and America know them. They revere

and celebrate them. The highest of all is placed on a level with Carlyle and Emerson. Such esthetic blossomings have always sprung from wide-spread and secure material prosperity. Next to England, Germany and France, little Belgium ranks among the rival commercial powers of the west.

So we can urge our merits with authority. We are worthy of being and remaining independent and free, since we possess ethnical qualities which are our own and help in making the many-sided strength and beauty of the world.

Perhaps we lacked warlike glory. But now, thanks to our very enemies, we have won it. Undoubtedly,—but we must not repeat it too often—, our dogged resistance helped England and France to a certain extent; we gave them time to organise and arm themselves behind us. We delayed the formidable surprise prepared by Germany.

But when we did that, we did something that was still more important.

We had the honour, unconsciously no doubt, of being the first defenders of a whole past of splendour and civilisation. Greece and Rome were standing by us, invisible. At Liège, in the nocturnal sky, the great wings of Pallas Athene were hovering above the monstrous prowling Zeppelins. None of our little Flemish or Walloon soldiers were conscious of it, and we ourselves, did not realise. We knew it but later, when the moral significance of this war appear-

ed to us. The German theorists have confessed their dreams of Asiatic civilisation, in which nations force their yoke upon other nations. The days of Darius, Xercès, Nebuchadnezzar have been called up as if they could be revived. Fair Liberty and organised Oppression were at stake again, and we, Belgians, engaged the battle.

In the immense woe which is spreading over us, if we can preserve, besides unblemished Hope, some cause of lofty enthusiasm and even joy, it is in thinking that our courage, our earnestness and our tenacity have served the greatest of human causes.

Let us add, also, that during those tragic hours of the first days of August, we loved, hated, willed, clamoured, sang and wept so intensely that all our past national life is not worth this one moment, unexpected and beautiful, lived under the thunderbolt.

Were we a nation, indeed, before this magnificent moment? We wasted ourselves in petty quarrels; the loadstone of high realities scarcely attracted us; we strove to be advocates, shopmen, functionaries, rather than citizens. Danger has gathered our scattered forces into one glowing sheaf. We erect it upon our destroyed towns, upon our plains levelled to the ground, upon the huge battlefield which our land has become, and already sheltering Victory in our hearts, — we wait.

Émile VERHAEREN.





*Ph. Belgica.*

TERMONDE — TOWN-HALL OF THE XVI<sup>th</sup> CENTURY  
burnt down by the Germans



*Ph. N.D.*

ANSEREMME — THE OLD PRIORY





*Ph. N.D.*

PANORAMA OF LOUVAIN — VIEW TAKEN FROM MOUNT-CÉSAR



*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN (FORMERLY THE MERCHANTS HALL) (destroyed)





Ph. N.D.

TH. BOUTS — THE LAST SUPPER (SAINT PETERS CHURCH AT LOUVAIN)

Miraculously the flames hardly touched this master-piece which pious hands have succeeded in saving.



*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

CRYPT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN (DRAPERS HALL (destroyed))



*Ph. N.D.*

ONE OF THE ROOMS OF THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUVAIN (destroyed)



# LIÈGE

*Liège and Dinant, our brave little  
France of the Meuse... (MICHELET).*

SHE is the guardian. The spur of her verdant hills closes the large battlefield to the West, and her river is an almost impassable barrier on the other side. Her old fortress, now dismantled, is the symbol of an ancient defensive; her forts, ripped open by the German shells, held out for twelve days against the most powerful army in the world. By stemming the German onrush they saved us, perhaps, from barbarism.

The August days will never be forgotten. What fever was burning within us, as we counted the hours, longing for news which the morning, midday and evening papers were compelled to deal out to us with parsimony.

At first the savage onset had startled us; then we had been joyously surprised at the humiliating failure of our enemy; and we had hoped for the French intervention. Then the intervening spaces had been given up and the city had surrendered, without her forts, which were holding, ...still holding on... At last there was a lull. The occupation became calm and regular. The population breathed, though feebly; they lived.

While I am writing, Liège, heavy-hearted and mute, keeps all her pride and all her hopes. She knows all about our advance and the progressive demoralisation of the enemy; a revengeful hatred is brooding in her manufacturing suburbs and the very humblest of her homes.

The old city has more than once

known such bitter pangs. Many a time a pall has spread over her history. She has never been spared by any invasion. Before Charlemagne, she was but an insignificant village; the Normans already ravaged her. Then it was the turn of the turbulent vassals emancipated by feudalism on the banks of the Meuse as on the Rhine. Notker was the first prince who could strengthen his hold on her with a regular and victorious authority. After him she enjoyed days of Peace and civic greatness, disturbed by intestine quarrels, by the jealousy of her neighbours and by the effects of vaster conflicts in which she was involved.

In the fifteenth century, she will hear the flapping of the Temeraire's standards; she will undergo the most terrible punishment for her resistance against this prince, who treated her as the Germans, in last August and September, treated Louvain. In the next century, the echo of the religious wars will reach her, and later on Mansfeld's steeds, pawing the ground, will spread terror in her suburbs. Lastly, during the revolutionary crisis, under Napoleon, and on the eve of Waterloo, she was spared no suffering. Twenty years ago our grandfathers still sang a lampoon in which the Prussians were compared to the unclean animal on which their grandsons feed.

All this is History... Yet never did the Liegeois own themselves conquered. Never did they lose that good-humour,



which is made up of confidence, bravery and pride. Uncommonly tenacious, ready to rebel under any yoke, just careless enough to be unacquainted with long fits of dejection, but always alive to their duties, to the iniquity they have endured and to possible vengeance, they never failed to hold up their heads after the storm. The silence they were forced to keep was ironical; it was neither despondent nor obsequious. Just as our factory workers refuse to work for the Germans of 1915, their ancestors refused to salute their occasional masters and barred and bolted their doors. If their houses were destroyed, they took refuge in the neighbouring forest; then they took advantage of the slightest lull to rebuild their roofs, take up their tools again, vindicate their franchise. What an admirable people! and how mistaken are the present masters of the old city, if they believe that they have reduced her in a few months; Woe to them, as to the tyrannies of yore, if a sudden change of fortune rendered their occupation precarious. They would soon feel the breath of hatred exhaled by the thousands of mouths which are sealed up at present; heavy hands would fall upon their enfeebled napes; the miners' pick-axes would finish the work of our blacksmiths' hammers and our armourers' files.

Look at this town! She seems to have been created to be the home of Liberty. You reach her only through the mighty zone of her industrial smoke. A hundred chimneys send forth gas more asphyxiating than those which Prussian malignity pours upon our trenches. In the night a hundred blastfurnaces belch forth volumes of fire, which seem to be the horrible

expectoration of some hellish monster; you would think it is the magic circle through which the hero of the legend tries in vain to pass. The river winding across its valley is broad enough, once rid of all its bridges, to check all possibility of retreat. In the recesses of its glens, how many places are there fit for murderous ambushes!

Such are the dreadful aspects of the old city. This is her smile: the circle once traversed, behind that sinister curtain, in the peace of the happy twilight, she appears like an enchantress. You see first the bewitching ensemble formed by the soft and varied outlines of her hills; then you perceive her white houses, straggling down to that French Meuse, whose clear waters roll on fine gravel. You hear the sound of the bells which make the towers of her Roman and Gothic churches alive and garrulous, while the chime of her old episcopal palace mingles its joyful and almost sprightly note with this pious chorus. Thus it was in olden times, when the minor Canons of the Cathedral sometimes hummed the burden of some popular dancing tune, before a well-spread table. Lastly you are startled by the animation of her streets, worthy of a larger city, and the joviality of the strollers, who, like true Southern people of the North, exchange greetings, smiles and quips across the streets. Fierce and jolly, the character of the Liégeois has hardly changed from Cæsar's Eburons down to our days, and my little native city will remain a kindly, smiling Republic, true and staunch in the Belgium of the future.

Maurice WILMOTTE,  
Professor at the University of Liege.  
Lecturer at the Sorbonne.



*Picture-Gallery, Brighton.*

A. DELAUNOIS — CHAPEL IN SAINT-PETER'S CHURCH, LOUVAIN (WATER-COLOUR)



*Ph. N.D.*

LOUVAIN — THE CHOIR-STALLS SAINT-GERTRUDE'S CHURCH





*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

SAINT-PETER'S CHURCH, LOUVAIN (destroyed)



*Ph. N. D.*

THE ROOD-LOFT IN SAINT-PETER'S CHURCH, LOUVAIN





PA ND.

TH. BOUTS — THE MARTYRDOM OF SAINT ERASMUS (TRIPTYCH)  
(SAINT-PETER'S CHURCH, LOUVAIN)

Though slightly burnt this wonderful triptych has apparently been saved and conveyed to a safe hiding place



*Ph. N.D.*

BRUSSELS THE GUILDHALL (TOWN-HALL-SQUARE)



*Ph. N.D.*

BRUSSELS — TOWN-HALL

This monument was built in 1402  
The tower was finished in 1454



*Ph. N.D.*

THE KING'S PALACE (TOWN-HALL SQUARE)

This building erected by the command of Charles the Fifth was formerly called Broodhuys (Bread market)





# Towns and Villages ransacked by the Vandals

DINANT, MALINES, TERMONDE, etc., etc.

THE destruction of so many monuments of the past, and so many historical and artistic memorials ordered, as a rule, without any military necessity by the leaders of the German army, wherever they came, can never be branded with sufficient ignominy. But besides this conspicuous vandalism there are ruins quite as distressing to those who love their country; the ruins of so many villages and unrenowned but charming country towns.

Indeed it is the village even more than the town which gives to a country its peculiar aspect. Whatever may be the differences between one region and another, from North to South and East to West, all over France, except in the departments where the great manufactures have suddenly altered the aspect of the country, every where the villages have a kindred look. Norman market-towns among the trees, hamlets of Brittany whose grey stone cottages nestle in a cleft of the rock, villages of Valois and Parisis, graceful and rustic as a young XVIII<sup>th</sup> century shepherdess or as a tale of Gerard de Nerval; large villages of the South with their white houses built neat and regular around the mall, the forum of the ancient municipium; villages of Lorraine clustering round their pointed steeples the

better to withstand the invader; villages of the mountains set in the depth of the glen; villages of the fertile plain where peace and plenty abound; villages of the forest, of the sea-shore, all the French villages tell with a sober eloquence the simple, every day history of an old agricultural civilisation, of a country where the peasant has been free for many a century. And every where or almost every where you can find in the site of the humblest houses, in their architecture a traditional taste for trees, flowers and creeping-plants, a proof of the instinctive taste of a race born for art.

Save for slight differences the Belgian villages made a similar impression on you. In Flanders as well as in the Walloon country in those beautiful provinces, which seemed to have forgotten war for ever, there were, before the war, a great many large villages so picturesquely built, so well adapted to their surroundings, so mellowed by time and so carefully preserved by men that they looked like positive works of art.

They did look so! For entire regions we must alas! speak in the past; wherever the German army passed, some months ago, nothing remains but ruins.

We can actually follow the road of



the invasion by the trace of blood and ruin it left behind. Every where slaughter, plunder, destruction and fire.

They entered Belgium by Verviers and the uplands of Herve, a high agricultural plain renowned for its fertile pastures, and where numerous large farms and important villages were built. Verviers, an unfortified town made no resistance : it was respected, only one factory was burnt by way of example; in the country some hostages were shot, some farms destroyed under various pretexts, but those were merely trifling acts of politeness. At Visé, near the Dutch frontier, where a division of Belgium cavalry courageously tried to oppose the enemy crossing the Meuse, the generals of the German emperor gave a better proof of what they were capable. Visé, once taken was more than half destroyed. But it was after the surrender of Liege that a systematic devastation began. All the roads of Belgium were necessary to the formidable invasion that was to follow : the historic routes of the Meuse and Sambre; the more difficult ones of the Ardennes; all had to suffer almost equally as the destructive hordes went by.

The Meuse valley! Many a soldier has passed that way in times of yore. Henri II, after the sack of Therouanne by Charles V went on a punitive expedition there; the bands of the Duke of Nevers carried it out in the most ruthless and sanguinary fashion; and before 1914, historians related that war had never been waged so cruelly as in that bloody, violent XVI<sup>th</sup> century. But neither the soldiers of the king of France nor the German troopers of the Emperor claimed to be the representatives of Culture, and no Hague Conference had

drawn up the laws of war. The armies of Louis XIV, of William of Orange, king of England and the armies of the French Revolution, which also went along those beautiful valleys, made war on soldiers only; if the latter burnt some castles it was with the help of the inhabitants led astray by social hatred.

But last Spring these were recollections belonging to history, to a very remote history, and nothing more peaceful could be imagined than the banks of the Meuse looking like a huge park. On the edge of the water, at the foot of wooded hills, many wealthy country-seats or elegant villas stood in the midst of gardens, their artificial rusticity blending harmoniously with the charm of the old grey stone villages. It was a pleasure resort, a wealthy comfortable land made for rest where Belgian prosperity was displayed with smiling complacency. The very towns had the welcoming look of watering-places. Namur smiled to the stranger in its belt of fortresses and had turned its old citadel into a park; Dinant looked like a capital in a comic opera, spreading out voluptuously at the foot of a rock round its old church with its quaint, charming bulbous steeple. Andenne, Huy, Hastieres, Yvoir, Freyr, Godinne, every village and tiny town of the country had the same look of peaceful, healthy gaiety—the gaiety of the Walloons. These were not exactly artistic towns boasting of picture-galleries and museums—though in some of them, at Huy, Dinant, Hastieres there were most beautiful churches, very old and quaint—yet they were works of art inasmuch as, in spite of the inevitable mistakes of modern building, they bore the stamp of the architectural tradition



*Ph. Express.*

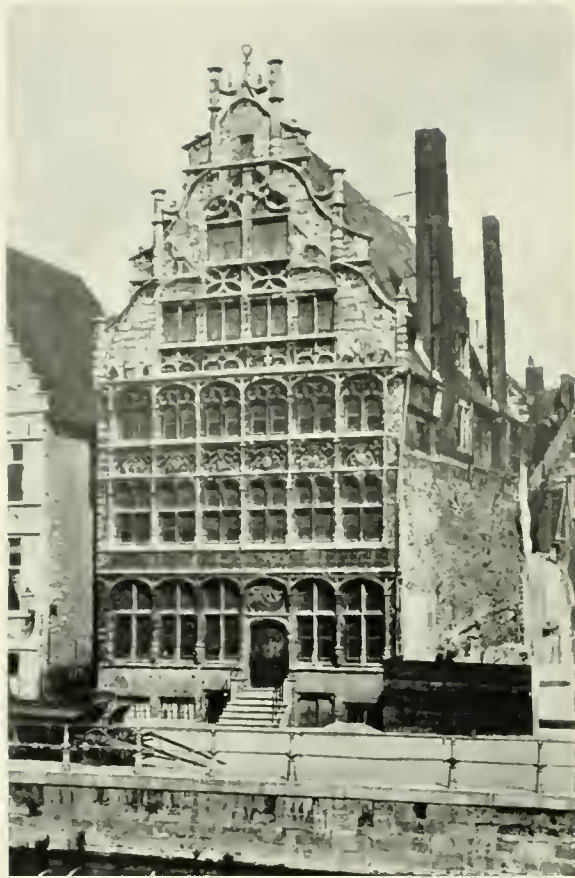
ANTWERP — FAÇADE OF A BOMBARDED HOUSE  
RUE DES TROIS-ROIS



*Ph. Express.*

ANTWERP — BERGHEM — (A BURNED DISTRICT)





*Ph. N D.*

GHENT — THE WATERMEN'S HOUSE



*Ph. N D.*

GHENT — THE TOWN-HALL



## TOWNS AND VILLAGES RANSACKED BY THE VANDALS

of the Meuse, full of charm and originality.

All, or nearly all, had to suffer the scourge of invasion. Namur, which was defended, bombarded and taken after a regular siege suffered comparatively little. It is the unfortified towns into which the Germans entered without striking a blow, or after having won a victory, that were plundered and burnt down. At Dinant, where the Germans, valiantly attacked by a French van guard, were at first severely checked, out of the fourteen hundred houses of the towns and its suburbs hardly two hundred remain standing. Near the church whose charred ruins are stained with bloody mud one hundred and twenty men were shot by machine-guns before the eyes of their wives; at the further end of the square eighty-four others were shot. In order the shots should not miss their mark the victims were formed into a square and put against a wall, and the German platoons fired into the mass. According to the Belgian official report the list of the civil victims at Dinant contains eight hundred names, and where one of the prettiest towns of the Meuse formerly stood there is nothing but deserted ruins, the ghost, the skeleton of a town.

The same fate befell Andenne, a graceful charming little Walloon city, less picturesque than Dinant, but pleasantly situated on the banks of the Meuse between Liege and Huy. Here the tragedy is still more unaccountable, for the Germans had not had to fight near Andenne as they were obliged to do near Dinant. In his terrible book : *The Barbarians in Belgium* M. Pierre Nothomb tells how. "After two days of a more or less pacific occupation on

Thursday August 20 at 6 in the evening a sharp firing began on several sides at once, and a dozen houses were set on fire between the Meuse and the railway station. The inhabitants who had fled for shelter to their cellars at first thought that the allies had arrived but they soon discovered that the firing was directed against them. Those who came out on their thresholds to see what was going on were killed. The burgermaster, M. Camus, who came up from his cellar, to close his door, was wounded by a chance bullet, his body was at once riddled with twenty bayonets. Regular volleys were aimed at the cellars and vent-holes."

Three hundred citizens were thus murdered, most of them before the eyes of their wives and children, and three hundred houses burnt down. The officer who presided over this gallant deed is called Shoenman. But general von Bulow hastened to assume the responsibility :

"It is with my consent, declared this noble warrior, that the General-in-Chief ordered the locality of Andenne to be burnt down and about one hundred persons to be shot." Apparently his subordinate had gone somewhat too far in putting more than three hundred to death...

Huy was not treated so cruelly : a few hostages were shot, some houses plundered and burnt down; yet not much to speak of compared with what was done elsewhere.

As for the villages on the banks of the Meuse or the neighbouring uplands, the numerous country-seats and manors standing on the woody slopes of the hills all were plundered.

But certain regions of the Ardennes

have suffered still more. Here the French acted first on the offensive and if our troops were finally obliged to retreat it was only after severe fights in which the Germans lost many men.

It is a woody country with barren plateaux, furrowed by deep valleys, a country marvelously fitted for guerilla warfare. It is well known that the Germans are terribly afraid of it : the free-shooter is their bugbear. So, when the French who had to defend the ground inch by inch, took advantage of the nature of the soil to lay successful ambushes they imputed them to the inhabitants. It was the pretext for horrible retaliation, slaughter, shooting, burning, bombardments which sometimes had their military effect ; for more than once our troops refrained, unless it was absolutely necessary, from defending a village or a farm, being quite certain that the defence would bring death and ruin to the inhabitants. For a long time no one knew what had happened in this unfortunate country which was in truth cut off from the rest of the world. Now we know that hundreds of its villages were destroyed and their inhabitants literally decimated.

These too were lovely villages, not so smiling and prosperous as those of the Meuse, but exquisitely picturesque with their slate-roofed houses built of grey stone, their pointed steeples, their water-mills admirably placed on the banks of clear rivers.

Peaceful, rustic hamlets clinging to the slope of a hill, agricultural and sylvan towns clustering thick at the crossing of the highways, Rossignol, Maissin, Neufchateau, Etalle, Paliseul, Herbeumont, Suxy we know that you too have cruelly suffered from the war ;

and when it is again possible to roam over the uplands of the Ardennes whence we can discover extensive landscapes looking like the backgrounds of Gothic pictures, and to wander through the deep valleys, where so often, in the midst of peaceful things, we believed we might forget the world, we shall meet with many a ruin. But the country called up by your sweet names will be all the dearer to us. It will have lost nothing of the charm it owes to its very nature, the configuration of its rough soil, the beauty of its changing sky more than to the effort of man ; and it will appear all the more touching to us for having suffered from the invasion of the Barbarians.

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On the contrary, in the Flemish-country the ravages are irreparable. Here, not only did war bring ruin and death, it completely altered the aspect of the country. In a few weeks it destroyed the patient labour of several centuries.

After the fall of Liege, while a German army marching successfully along the right bank of the Meuse, drove back the French into their own territory, another carried on the invasion of Belgium along a huge battle-front stretching from North to South, sweeping before it the little Belgian army which heroically defended its ground inch by inch. Every where it was guilty of the same ravages and horrors. Other writers will relate the martyrdom of Aerschot, Louvain, Tongres, Diest of so many towns and villages of the rich land of Brabant which seemed made for festive gatherings, revels and country-fairs and not for war. Malines, a thoughtful sister of Bruges and Louvain,





*G. Braun et C<sup>s</sup>.*

*Luxembourg Gallery.*

F. WILLAERTS — NUNS COMING HOME      GHENT (PICTURE)



*Ph. Vigarova.*

FRANK BRANGWYN — OLD HOUSES IN GHENT (ETCHING)





*Cl. Braun et C<sup>ie</sup>.*

*Luxembourg Gallery.*

A. BOERTSOEN — THE THAW (PICTURE)  
View of an old quarter in Ghent in the snow



C. HOUSSARD — TOWN-HALL OF ALOST  
(ETCHING)



C. HOUSSARD — THE BELFREY OF BRUGES  
(ETCHING)



*Ph. Paul Becker.*

*Belonging to M. Delbrugère.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — EVENING AT BRUGES — POTTERY WHARF (PICTURE)



*Ph. Vizzavona.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — THE NUNNERY (PICTURE)



*Ph. N.D.*

BRUGES — VAN-EYCK SQUARE



*Ph. N.D.*

BRUGES — THE LAKE OF LOVE



was taken and lost again and again. Several times the Germans bombarded it, persistently aiming at the noble tower of Saint-Rombaut rising, like a torch, above the Flemish plain. But when the town had surrendered it was not burnt down nor systematically destroyed; and if the fertile land stretching between Brussels and Antwerp has been laid waste the Germans may at any rate plead that it saw hard fighting and that the Belgian army, sheltered in Antwerp, made several sallies seriously harrying the rear of the invading army. For the destruction of Termonde they can plead no excuse. It is only when the last Belgian troops had left it that it was systematically destroyed. As it had already suffered greatly from the first bombardment and seemed definitively in the power of the invading army the burgermaster went to implore general von Sommerfeld—all these names must be remembered—who was quietly sitting on a chair, outside a café on the Market-Place. He pleaded, begged and wept and was about to kneel before the destroyer of his town when this one, coldly looking at him, answered simply "Nein! razieren"; making a sign to the pioneers to begin their work.

Nothing remains of Termonde but a few heaps of rubbish on the banks of the Escaut.

And yet what a pretty town it was! It was surrounded by picturesque ramparts after the manner of Vauban, wide moats joining the Escaut made her a graceful girdle of water adding to her homely, kindly charm. She looked like a little old port squatting along the broad river and carefully guarded after the ancient fashion against undesirable intruders. To enter Termonde you had to

cross bridges after bridges and all of a sudden you reached a many-coloured street with brightly painted houses, their façades standing in a row like Nuremberg toys. A' bit of a canal, or a branch of the river reflected the windows adorned with lace-curtains and vases full of artificial flowers. Yet no animation, save along the wharves where stood the factories. No noise but the shrill sound of the soldiers' trumpets. At certain hours, there were not three persons to be seen on the Market Place. At times the door of a café was shut with a dull sound. An officer loitered slowly to his Club, then all was silent and still again. But this stillness was in no wise hostile nor sad. It was a smiling, comfortable quiet. The people of Termonde had been used to it for so long that they could not realize a different way of living. They felt comfortably dull, and seemed happy to feel so.

But in Termonde, besides the charm of her many-coloured streets the visitor was interested by the graceful elegance of her Town-Hall. Throughout the ages it had undergone many repairs yet all the various styles of its architecture harmonized perfectly. One part had been restored from the drawings of Maerster-tins, after a very pure, simple Gothic style, while the left wing was ornamented with a spiral gable in the Renaissance style... In the midst of the building the tower rose up boldly crowned with four turrets whose slender tops surrounded a lantern ending in a bulbous spire. True, this monument had nothing of the solemn grandeur of the Belfrey of Bruges, nor the daring pride of the Belfrey of Ypres nor again of the light grace of the Town-Hall of Audenarde; but its outline was graceful and proud

and on the whole it stood well among the civil buildings of Flanders. In the interior the town council had collected all the pictures it possessed and which were, almost all of them, the works of local painters; for Termonde has held a conspicuous place in the artistic history of contemporary Belgium. It is the birth-place of the great landscape painter Courtens. Besides, there were also some very valuable old pictures. In Notre-Dame, the dark old church whose low massive block rose above the old churchyard, amidst the golden marble chapels, you could see a remarkable picture of Gaspard de Crayer and two excellent Van Dycks: the "Adoration of the Shepherds" and a "Crucifixion".

Have these precious pictures been saved? I cannot tell; but the charming buildings in which they were framed have disappeared for ever. No doubt Termonde will rise from its ashes but it will be another town with nothing of the sober, thoughtful charm of the destroyed city.

\* \* \*

Alas! such is the case for almost all Flanders. Nothing will give us back their peaceful, serene features. Their wounds will be healed, their disasters repaired with the patient energy they showed throughout the ages; but their silent, thoughtful landscapes looking like nunnery gardens, their quaint, smiling, peaceful villages have gone for ever.

We shall perhaps see again the tower of the Guildhall of Ypres rising proudly over the reconquered plain, for pious hands can build it again such as it used to be; but we shall nevermore see the little old square, the charming church of Loo so artistically mellowed by time; the sweet nunnery of Dixmude, its old bridge over the Yser, its many-coloured houses; the wharves shaded by ancient trees will never be built again. We may say the same of Nieuport. No archeologist, no architect will ever give us again the old brick church and its bulbous steeple, the lowly little Town Hall with its solemn flight of steps nor the Drapers' Hall with its graceful square tower.

What would be the use of building up again those humble monuments? They were in no ways models of architecture and their beauty consisted in their perfect fitness to their surroundings, the colour time had laid on them, the harmony established between the trees, the sky and themselves. The trees of Nieuport have been rased to the ground by shells and the little ancient port lulled to sleep with its memories along the muddy Yser is nothing more but a heap of bricks of rubbish.

Nieuport, Ypres, Dixmude, Termonde those names make me realize as nothing ever could the awful meaning of the word irreparable.

L. DUMONT-WILDEN.







*Ph Paul Becker*

*Belonging to M. Max Volfers.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — AT THE TURNING OF THE CANAL OF BRUGES (PICTURE)



VICTOR GILSOUL. — EVENING AT LOO — FLANDERS (PICTURE)





*Belonging to H. M. the King of Belgium.*

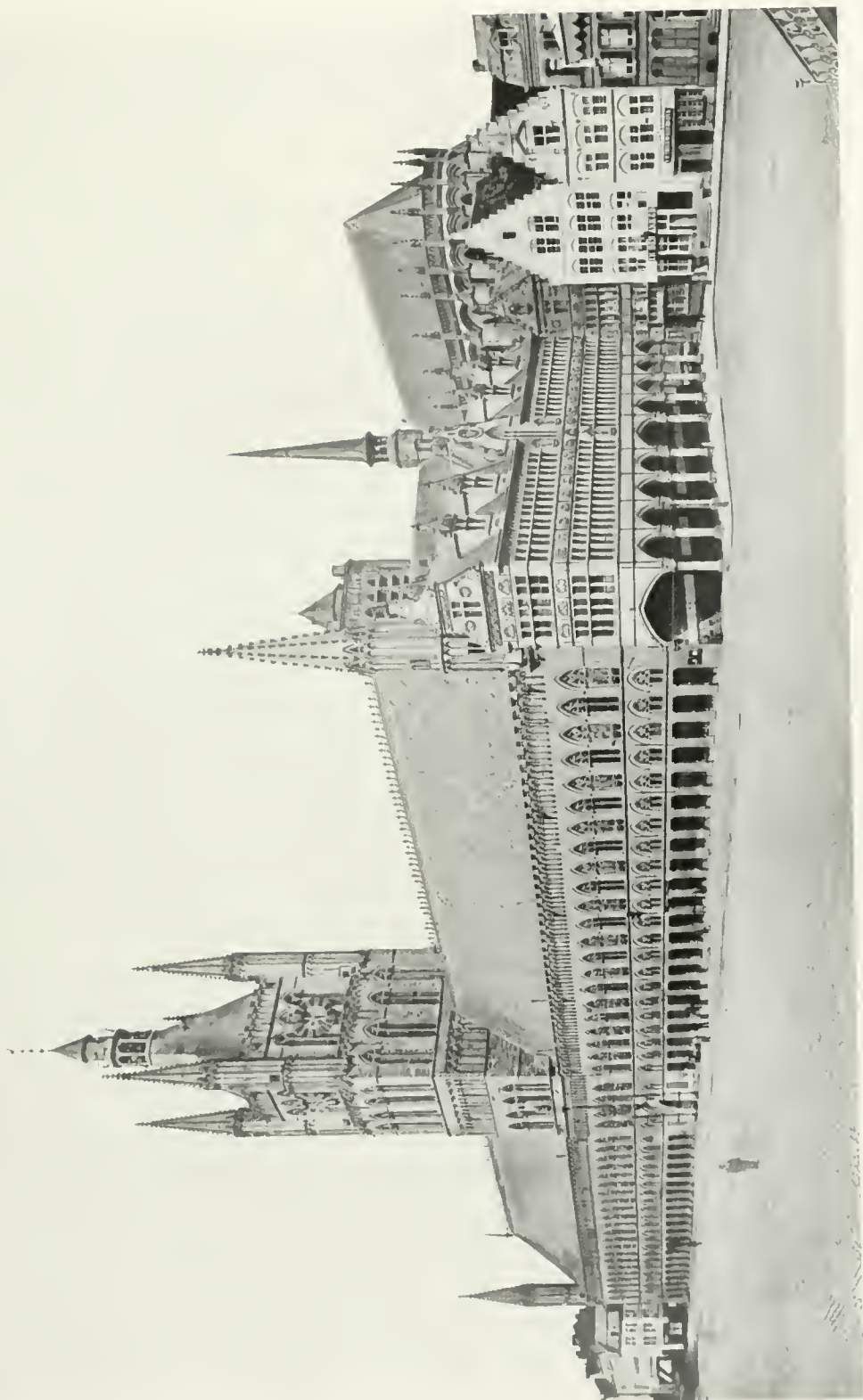
VICTOR GILSOUL — LANDSCAPE ON THE BELGIAN COAST (PICTURE)



*Ph. Paul Becker*

*Barcelona Gallery.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — VIEW OF AN OLD FLEMISH VILLAGE (PICTURE)



Ph. N. D.

THE GUILDHALL YPRES (destroyed)





*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

THE MEAT MARKET, YPRES (destroyed)



# THE CRIME OF LOUVAIN

THE crime of Louvain is not merely a crime against Life : it is a crime against the Spirit, as Pierre Nothomb has recently written. It was impossible indeed to evoke the name of Louvain without thinking of the intellectual centre of such world-wide fame, whose foundation may be traced back to 1425 ; it was impossible to go through the narrow winding streets of the old Brabantine city, without admiring some artistic façade belonging to one of the forty-three colleges of the ancient University ! In the last few years, new monuments, laboratories, institutes, training-colleges, were rising almost everywhere, asserting the fruitful prosperity of the School.

In the Middle-Ages, Louvain was a powerful and thriving commercial city. The scarlet cloth, the carpets, the buckram, the gold, silver and silk trimmings woven at Louvain were celebrated all over Europe. To shelter the loom and stalls of the Drapers the Magistrates built in 1317 a dark and austere-looking Hall of a very sober and perfectly pure style.

Out of the two rooms on the ground-floor, one only still existed in our days, almost unaltered, divided into two naves by a long row of pillars, whose capitals were decorated with foliage and fruit ; harmonious semi-circular arcades, with vigorous mouldings, were supported by the pillars. Magnificent pendants bore the oaken beams of the ceiling ; the subjects which they represented were most varied : foliage, burlesque scenes,

fantastic or hybrid creatures. Several of these pendants were original specimens, rarely met with at the same epoch in the rest of our country ; all were firmly and roughly modelled, contrasting with the more delicate and graceful chiselling of a later period. The two busts of mail-clad Knights, separated by two shields, have often been reproduced. " That piece of work, firmly modelled and of a very good style, says J. Destrées, would prove, were the evidence lacking, the distinguished place which Sculpture already held in our land, as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century. "

The Drapers' Hall of Louvain did not long know the swarming animation of the markets and of the celebrated September Fairs ; in the second half of the fourteenth century, a fierce struggle between patricians and plebeians already ruined the trade and forced the drapers to emigrate to Holland and England.

The great Brabantine city was going to fall from her high rank ; she was doomed to ruin, when at the beginning of the fifteenth century, she had a unique opportunity of knowing thriving days again. The Duke of Brabant's counselors had just decided to found a centre of higher Education in the Low-Countries, in order to retain within our frontiers the young men thirsting for Knowledge who were compelled to attend foreign Universities. The Magistrates of Louvain used every means in their power and put forth every skilful argument to bring the Duke to fix the seat of the new Academy in their city ; they gained their end.

None of the other towns, in our provinces, could avail itself of the precious advantages which Louvain possessed to become a centre of Learning : Large premises abandoned by the ruined trade, inhabitants whose manners had been moulded and softened by continual contact with foreigners and commercial habits, a healthy, mild and temperate climate, so often praised by Historians, large gardens, lending their shade to the solitary walk of scholars, silent and tranquil streets, an everlasting peace, amidst which nothing could disturb intellectual labours nor deep and abstract meditations : *Nusquam studetur quietius*, wrote Erasmus.

With the youthful Alma Mater, Louvain recovered Life and Hope. Conscious of her dignity and of the important part she was destined to play, she wanted to deck herself with peerless artistic jewels. The very year in which the University was founded, the building of St Peter's collegiate Church was undertaken under the direction of the Architect Sulpice Van Horst of Diest; the choir was finished in 1434, but the construction of the Church was not completed before the beginning of the fifteenth century. Magnificent towers of flamboyant style were to crown the building and give it the tapering height of the loveliest cathedrals; they fell down several times during the construction and the project was abandoned; in consequence the monument has always kept the aspect of an unfinished work.

The general aspect of the interior was impressive, owing to the loftiness of the vaults, the elegance of the proportions, the purity of the lines; seven polygonal chapels clustered round the apsis of the chancel.

The collegiate Church of Louvain contained artistic treasures. After a drawing by Mathieu de Layens, a tabernacle in stones of Avesnes was wrought for St Peter's; it was a light and graceful pyramidal turret richly decorated with the finest sculptures. At the entrance of the Chancel, one might admire a rood-loft of which the three ogival arches, borne by slender pillars, supported myriads of statuettes.

Let us mention also the carved wooden pulpit, and the remarkable Renaissance porch, decorated all over with lace-work, festoons, garlands and medallions.

Two celebrated masterpieces of Thierry Bouts eclipsed the other paintings, remarkable though they were, which decorated St Peter's. It was the Last Supper, one of the purest jewels of the Flemish School, — in which among the on-lookers, the portrait of the painter was to be noticed, — and the Martyrdom of St Erasmus, a tryptich of a smooth bright colouring, whose side-leaves represented St Jerome and St Bernard.

The Barbarians set fire to the beautiful Collegiate Church of Louvain; what remains of it now is but an empty skeleton... The old Flemish tapestries were burnt; the magnificent tabernacle is ruined. By a miracle, the chapels which surround the chancel, in which were Thierry Bouts' masterpieces were preserved from the fire. Both paintings escaped the flames which have only slightly burnt them. The pious hands of one of my University Colleagues put them in a place of safety.

The town-hall of Brussels had just been terminated when the Magistrates of Louvain, seized with an ardent spirit of





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YPRES — THE DRAPERS HALL ON FIRE



*Ph. Antony*

YPRES — THE DRAPERS' HALL ON FIRE



*Ph. Antony.*

THE RUINS AT YPRES — THE LIBRARY





*Ph. E. Van Hammée (History of Belgium in the war of the Nations). Copyright.*

YPRES AFTER THE FIRST BOMBARDMENT

## THE CRIME OF LOUVAIN

emulation, decided to build an edifice that would surpass it in richness and elegance. They applied to a young architect, Mathieu de Layens, whose masterpiece has immortalized his name. The first stone of the town-hall was laid in 1448; the construction was completed in 1463. Everyone knows this incomparable monument, its stone-work as fine and delicate as the most beautiful lace and its fronts decorated with a thousand dainty carvings; a perfect harmony regulates the entanglement of the balustrades, pinnacles, small columns, bell-turrets and turrets which spring up, standing out against the azure sky with amazing boldness. The town-hall of Louvain seems the work of a medieval image-maker, a precious tabernacle enlarged beyond all measure and fit to be placed in a sanctuary, sheltered from the inclemency of our climate.

Did the heavy and dull-witted beer-drinkers feel any sudden thrill of artistic emotion before this "Fairy-Palace", so exquisitely decorated? They maintain that they risked their lives and saved it from the flames! Alas! The "Fairy-Palace" stands alone, in the midst of general devastation; it seems to mourn over the precious jewels that surrounded it like a crown: the collegiate Church, sprung from the same artistic impulse, and, so to speak, from the same creative breath, and all the ancient houses with their narrow gables and their fronts adorned with inscriptions, medallions and gilt mouldings.

If the town-hall of Louvain was spared by the Barbarians, the Hall was not thought worthy of the same favour; having become for many centuries a centre of Learning and Patriotism, it deserved more than anything else the

blows of the disciples of Higher Culture.

As early as 1432, the city of Louvain offered premises to the University in the Drapers' Hall, for the teaching of Theology; and the following year; other premises were disposed for the Faculties of Law and Medicine. In 1676, the University purchased the Hall from the City; a few years later a spacious story was raised on the edifice, and in 1723 a perpendicular building was added.

In our days the entire Hall was occupied by the University Library.

The huge reading-room, known as the "Portrait-Gallery" contained a unique collection of which the loss is irreparable. There portraits of the most illustrious professors and eminent benefactors of the earlier University had been collected and though the artistic value of those paintings was unequal, all of them had a deep historical interest. Before this gallery of thinkers with hard and stern features, you felt penetrated with a profound sense of respect towards study and learning; the feverish and always hurried activity of which a room for reading and research-work is an ardent centre, formed a striking contrast with the calm and meditative attitude of our former masters.

In the largest of the Libraries, the dimensions of which were enormous, a magnificent oaken wainscoting, divided into porticoes with columns, supported canopies sheltering the statues of the great philosophers and writers of Antiquity.

The Professor's working-room was a jewel of the finest Renaissance Architecture; we had just brought to light there, last year, delicate vaults and oaken wainscotings of a very fine workmanship.

The solemn sittings for promotions and doctorates were held there, with all the splendour of academic protocol, in the ancient medical lecture-room, preserved with its forms, stalls, galleries and pictures.

The foundation of the University Library of Louvain dates from 1636; numerous collections of old books and manuscripts, bequeathed by private persons, enriched the store considerably and gave it a first-rate importance. The number of our manuscripts amounted to about 500; the most celebrated was a little M. S., written in Thomas a Kempis' own hand. We also possessed several Prayer-Books decorated with very rich illuminations and beautiful miniatures.

Among the numberless treasures exhibited in large glass-cases, one could notice : the erection bull of the Studium of Louvain granted by Pope Martin V in 1425; André Vésale's famous work, *De humani corporis fabrica*, a copy printed on vellum, given by Charles V to the University; a very fine set of Flemish bindings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, memorials of the the ancient University, seals, medals, diplomas.....; typographic curiosities, bibliographical rarities of all sorts.

The Library of Louvain contained over 250.000 volumes. Its chief wealth consisted in collections of old printed papers and incunabula. The 800 or 1000 incunabula of Louvain formed one of the most precious collections of Europe; very rare editions and unique specimens were to be found there. The numerous collections given by specialists to our Library included many a famous work issued from the presses set up in the University town in the early beginnings of Printing, when the School of

Louvain was playing such an important part in the movement of Humanism.

Who is not acquainted with the active share which the school of Divinity of Louvain had in the great dogmatic quarrels? Some pious hands had gathered together in volumes the documents, satires, letters and placards connected with the Reformation in the Low-Countries, Baïanism and Jansenism. The reconstitution of such a complete collection of historical documents is impossible.

The Halls of Louvain have always been the centre of an intense University-Life. It seemed as if the ghosts of André Vésale and Just Lipse could be seen, outlined on the thick black walls; in these vast rooms, filled with precious and touching memories, one thought of the old School of Louvain, lit up by the warmest rays of the Renaissance; one called up those "patriot" Professors, the defenders of our sacred liberties, whom the Austrian soldiers, with naked swords, kept locked up in the University Halls, in the hope of overcoming their heroic resistance by starvation.

I saw the ruins of Louvain; I saw the treasures, accumulated by ages of fruitful labour and patient research, burning to ashes. Of the University Halls, nothing remains but fragments of columns, bricks, stones and beams, inextricably heaped together; in the streets of the old devastated city, on the ruins that cover all the wealthiest quarters and still further out into the country, half-consumed leaves of manuscripts and books are blown here and there at the mercy of the winds.

P. DELANNOY

*Professor and Librarian of the University  
of Louvain.*





*Ph Viegavona*

L. HUYGENS. — THE DRAPERS HALL OF YPRES ON FIRE (PICTURE)



*Ph. of the Historical Monuments.*

THE BELFREY OF THE DRAPERS' HALL. YPRES (before its destruction)





*Ph. F. Van Hammée. (History of Belgium in the war of the Nations). Copyright*

THE BELFREY OF THE DRAPERS' HALL, YPRES  
(after the bombardment and the fire)





*Ph. F. Van Hamme* (History of Belgium in the war of the Nations) Copyright.

#### RUINS AT YPRES



*Ph. Capit. Gérard.*

#### RESULT OF A BOMB. FURNES

# YPRES

THE systematic destruction of the buildings of Ypres carried out by the German army, which cannot be accounted for unless it be by military necessity, affords another instance of the mental attitude of the Germans waging war not only on men but also on ideas.

The first conspicuous manifestation of this mental disposition was the burning and sack of Louvain.

The second was the bombardment of the Cathedral of Reims.

A third is undeniably to be found in the obstinate fury with which they have attacked the belfrey and the Hall of Ypres.

Louvain was the centre of the culture and influence of Catholic learning. The University of Louvain, the *Alma Mater*, was essentially the spiritual stronghold of science in harmony with faith. The crime was wilfully perpetrated against it premeditated and carried out in cold blood. The burning and plundering of the famous library, the ravaging of the Cathedral plainly proclaim it.

The persecution and murder of so many Belgian prelates, monks and priests, the useless bombardment of the Cathedral of Malines were prompted by the same motives, the sectarian hatred of a Protestant emperor who, like a spoilt child, fancies he can do away with a tradition or a doctrine by pulling down a building it had inspired.

Reims is, in a way, the Palladium of historic France faithful to her beliefs. Germany wished to destroy it.

It was the true splendid symbol of the glorious, magnificent history of a

nation that the invaders aimed at and attempted to suppress. The outrage committed on the chapel and cottage at Donremy was inspired by a similar fury.

On the other hand, Ypres was the obvious symbol of the undying spirit of the ancient commoners, the survival of the local particularism which from the remotest days of the Middle-Ages had, in Belgium, opposed the Town-Hall to the castle of the overlord or of his deputy.

The autocrat fed on the principles of Prussian militarism, imbued with the prejudices springing naturally from the strict discipline of the army applied to a whole nation, was fain to strike at the monument which, in this town, by its imposing size and richness, bore irrefutable witness to the victories the chartered towns, craftsmen and guilds had won, throughout the ages, over the central power represented by the overlord or his vassal, by the king or his deputy governor.

This communal spirit outlived feudalism and all later forms of government. It still exerts in Belgium its lasting influence.

The same despotic, brutal will which ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the burgermaster Max commanded that the Belfrey and Guildhall of Ypres should be burnt down.

In those buildings, as well as in this daring man, was embodied the native spirit of resistance which the imperialism of William II could not brook on the roads where, nevertheless, he did not fear to drive his servile hordes.

Such is the meaning of this barbarous



deed which makes the world all the poorer in depriving it of one of its most significant master-pieces.

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With the Belfrey and the Guildhall of Ypres it is not only a piece of architecture which disappears. Buildings in their general outline can be restored. It is only by dint of constant repairs that they escape death. It is invaluable artistic, historical memorials which are lost for ever.

Indeed pages of history were recorded on the walls by painters, in the stone of mausoleums and statues by sculptors, in many a work by craftsmen. The soul and aspect of the old city have been ruthlessly destroyed. Such a loss, as well as the loss of the invaluable MSS and books of Louvain, of the ancient sculptures on the façades of Reims are definitively irreparable.

The slumbering town of Ypres stretches out in the low plains of Flanders with its towers and pinions rising above the ruins of its ancient ramparts dismantled in 1856. It gazes at itself in the waters of its moats, ponded by the sluggish Yperlee.

Lying far from busy cities, out of the beaten tracks followed by the tourists Ypres deserved a pilgrimage. Since the days of the motor-car it was quite fashionable to go there. Since the XIII<sup>th</sup> century it has seen its population gradually decrease from two hundred thousand inhabitants to about a tenth of this number, and yet still displays everywhere the marks of its by-gone splendour and long prosperity. The quaint, morbid charm of the Past has bestowed on it the power of moving men.

In former days the fullers and dra-

pers set four thousand looms at work. Their corporations paid for the building of the enormous Hall which took more than a century to complete. Now only a few nimble-fingered lace-workers, their cushions and bobbins on their laps mingle the threads of the fine « Valenciennes » as they sit on the thresholds of their tottering houses.

The Past spoke with such a persuasive eloquence at Ypres ! The long wide Market-Place made to hold numberless inhabitants, the gigantic belfrey, the huge Guildhall, the vast cathedral spoke to the dullest. And the once sumptuous dwellings, still rising every where, illustrated the evolution of architectural styles from the façade of the Rue de Lille, the Gothic Butchers' Hall and the old « Guasthuys » Belle, down to the houses of the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI and bore witness to a local prosperity persisting in the midst of vicissitudes.

\* \* \*

What of these treasures shall we find again?

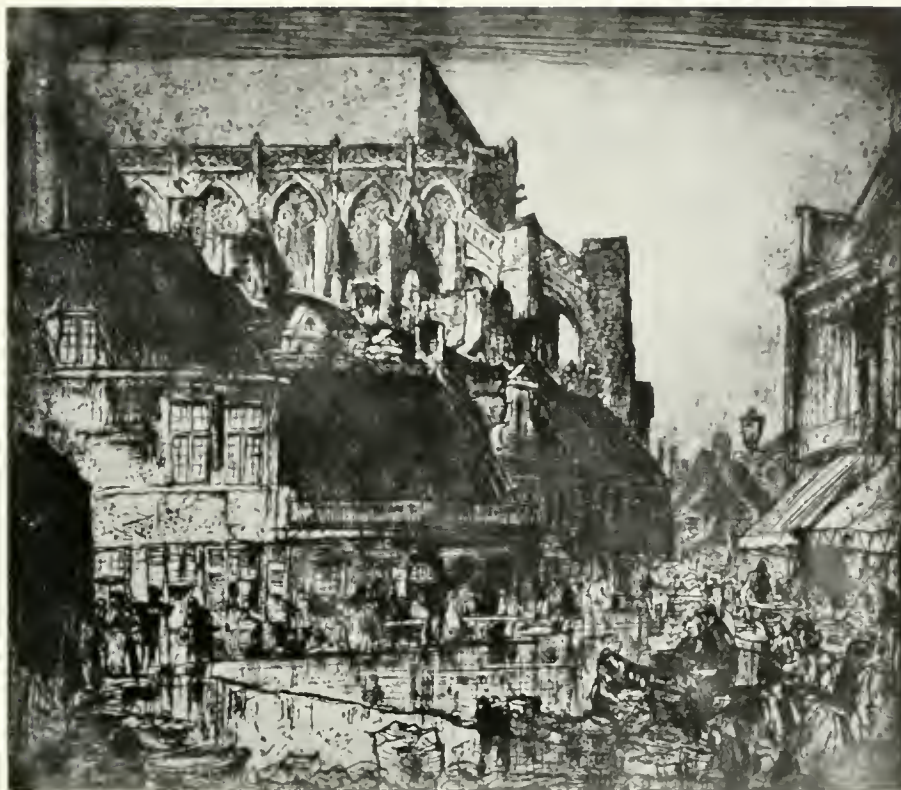
Already photographs have shown us the irreparable damage : the Guildhall burnt and in ruins, the crumbling remains of the Town-Hall, the belfrey tower destroyed ; Saint-Martin's cathedral plundered, the squares and streets of the town ravaged by shells and flames.

The Guildhall was decorated with mural paintings. Some dated from the XIV<sup>th</sup> and XV<sup>th</sup> centuries. They had been injudiciously repaired. Others were painted in the course of the last century.

Guffens, Swerts, Pauwels and the still greater master Delbecke had covered them with vast pictures recording the past glories of the town.

In the frescoes of Ypres Delbecke





*Ph. Vizzarona*

FRANK BRANGWYN — THE APSIS OF THE CHURCH OF SAINTE-WALBURGE.  
FURNES (ETCHING)



*Ph. Vizzarona*

*Luxembourg Gallery.*

LUCIEN FRANK — THE PANNE (PICTURE)  
Last residence of the Belgian King



*Ph. Morez de Croon.*

FURNES — THE TOWN-HALL, LAW-COURTS, THE BELFREY AND CHURCH OF SAINTE WALBURGE



*Ph. E. Van Hammée.* (History of Belgium in the war of the Nations). Copyright.

VIEW OF RUINS THROUGH AN OPENING MADE BY A SHELL



had given full scope to his personal curious talent. No important work of his exists any where else. He died comparatively young leaving this significant ensemble almost finished. Now nothing remains of Delbecke's works except a few sketches and small pictures of no importance. The works of this painter, which deserved to hold a conspicuous place in the modern Belgian school have been reduced to nothingness for ever. If one bears in mind the interest aroused by the smallest bit of fresco recently discovered, one will realize the admiration which would have been attributed, in the future to this harmonious series of pictures so ruthlessly destroyed.

Poor town ! When war is over shall we find again in that curious hospital Belle, the tryptych of Melchior Brœderlam, painter to Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy from 1382 to 1401 ? The work of this predecessor of the Van Eycks, this Yprois ancestor of the School of Bruges was a document of the greatest interest. With an ingenuousness which already makes use of skillful technical means Brœderlam painted the Virgin and Child between the donors accompanied by their Patron Saints.

The Virgin-Queen, with a gold crown, her delicate features and sweet look, is arrayed in red and gold brocade. Salomon Belle and his sons, guarded by a Saint George, clad in strange armour, spear in hand, Christine de Guines and her daughters with Saint-Catherine had thus remained—through many other wars and vicissitudes—ever since the XIV<sup>th</sup> century in the hospital they had founded. What fate has befallen them ?

And in Saint-Martin's Church what has become of the richly decorated

Gothic monument erected in memory of Louise de Laye, the widow of Hugonet, lord chancellor of Burgundy ? And the tomb of Antoine de Henin ? And the stone which was laid over the remains of Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres, the austere founder of Jansenism ?

The splendid rose-window has surely been shattered to pieces and the triumphal arch built in 1600 by Urban Taillebert overthrown. And the rood-loft with its alabaster statues, the exuberant sculptures on the pulpit, the choir-stalls and the pictures set so harmoniously in the dim light of the aisles—no doubt they too have been burnt down.

Alas, Ypres, woeful martyr, has thy cask et of buildings lost its sweet old cloister with its flamboyant ogives ! its quaint « *conciergerie* » built in the XVII<sup>th</sup> century in the Renaissance style—every where else out of fashion—its charming nuns' workroom in Saint-John's hospital ? its gabled façades of the old abbaye of Therouanne ? its tower of Saint-Nicolas ? Merghelynck's house containing a gallery of XVIII<sup>th</sup> furniture and knicknacks and the churches ? the old gates of the city ? the old houses ? and all the moving and picturesque witnesses of the Past ?

Whatever is still standing among the dust and ruins, the wounds inflicted to the venerable town, the outrages it had to bear at the hands of the enemy will never be healed or blotted out.

Art, history, tradition, legend flourished therein and have been utterly destroyed.

Those who are guilty of this crime and responsible for this wilfull devastation can plead no excuse.

Paul LAMBOTTE,  
*Fine-Arts Secretary in Belgium.*





## NIEUPOORT, FURNES, DIXMUDE

**A**MIDST the damp meadows of maritime Flanders the small towns resembled sanctuaries. They arose out of the Pasf humble and innocent. Old, secluded, their beauty remained unnoticed by the passer-by; to see them one had first to love them, to hear them one must needs know how to listen to the silence. And one could not tell if that peculiar charm which emanated from them was that of death or of eternal life.

Nieuport to-day is nothing but a heap of ruins. But the enemy keep up their furious attack against this dead city. When staggering with horror amid the deafening roar of the shells one seeks to find one's way in what was the town, the terrible sameness of the ruins prevents one at first from discovering the site of the church, the hospital and the market. A soldier leads you across the wilderness and in following what remains of the alleys one soon reaches the market-place.

Old memories return. It was quiet, rectangular and alway empty. The damp air of the pasture-lands mingled with the briny smell of the docks. Peaceful wine-shops and square houses gazed placidly at one another; in the background, flanked by a curious tower, an ancient building stretched out, the

Merchants' Hall, the remains of a by-gone splendour, an instance of a vigorous life now passed away. Behind these ogived bays in the halls where, in former days, the merchants carried on their business, slept the quaint pictures, memories and venerable archives. Facing it broad streets led to the harbour, one lined with low yellow houses, the smoky homes of shrimp fishers, and the other with old grey dwellings of no special period, whose lines once were carved by humble artisans, delighting in ornemanting with harmonious lines the pointed gables or in placing above the windows fine shells in softly curving lines... There stands the hospital and its humble turret, the curious "Hotel de l'Esperance", there the Dunnehuus with its light stone mullions where lived Isabel and Albert; there the old prison whose low windows are protected by strong iron bars.

Close to the Market-Place, on the outskirts of the town the church stood firmly set in the ground; a terre-plein shaded by tall trees stretched in front of its dark porch where, in the twilight, in a square lantern burnt a poor flickering flame, showing the way to the holy women in their black mantles.

The church had a large tower, so large that it appeared low. Yet one



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FURNES — THE MARKET-PLACE BEFORE THE BOMBARDMENT — KING ALBERT REVIEWING THE TROOPS



*Ph. Capt. Gerard*

FURNES — THE DESERTED TOWN



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THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF DIXMUDE  
AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT





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VIEW OF HOUSES DESTROYED AT NIEUPORT



*Ph. Paul Becker*

VICTOR GILSOUL — DOCK AT NIEUPORT  
NEAR THE OLD LIGHT-HOUSE (PICTURE)



LÉON CASSEL — NUN AT THE WELL —  
THE NUNNERY DINXMUDE (PICTURE)



*Ph. Paul Becker*

*Belonging to M. Lembée*

VICTOR GILSOUL — NIEU-PORT — EVENING ON THE CHANNEI. (PICTURE)





VICTOR GILSOUL — ENTRANCE OF THE VILLAGE OF MANNEKENSVÈRE ON THE  
BANKS OF THE YSER BETWEEN NIEUPOORT AND FURNES (PICTURE)



*Ph. Paul Becker*

*Belonging to M. Michielssens.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — TREES ON THE FLEMISH COAST (PICTURE)

could see it from afar, from the depth of the meadows of the Yser and from the heights of the rippling dunes, at times even from the shore through an opening in the sand-hills. The other towers along the coast were light-houses or watch-towers; warlike and sullen they symbolized their resistance to the tempest and one could feel the kindly welcome of their shelter. Ancient and powerful it seemed to have grown low and squat with time, and in the evening it was like one of these pious mothers who had opened her sable mantle to gather her children to her.

It had formerly stood at the mouth of the calm Yser, the centre of a busy, thriving country town, it had watched the walls being built up around it and seen it become a fortified town rising proudly above the waves; its bell had sounded the alarm and victory on the blessed day when the archduke Albert had defeated Maurice de Nassau and his troopers beneath its ramparts. A picture hanging in the little gallery near by has handed down the memory of this day. An animated plan of Nieuport was traced on its canvass ornemented with figures and explanatory legends. Across the channel the enemy had thrown a bridge: "*Hier is de brug van de Vyand*"—but it was burnt down by our men. The enemy crossed the river, but from Saint-Georges and Ramscapelle came reinforcements in hot haste: "*Hier is het sercours!*" The enemy then concentrated his effort on the banks of the river in spite of the line of ships which were firing on them pitilessly. But the foe was soon crushed by the victorious Flemings: "*De vyand loopt naar de zee*"; the enemy was thrown into the sea! Prefiguring that other battle where

another Albert was destined to fight—and destined to conquer.

In the church the Spanish period was recorded otherwise than in a humble picture of Folklore. From out of the darkness of the arches, through the heavy rood-loft of the Renaissance, one could perceive on and about the altar, treasures of infinite worth. Rich tombs, pompous inscriptions immortalized illustrious captains, valiant knights, governors with high sounding names. One could still hear their spurred footsteps ring out in the silence. Amidst the portraits of saints and kings you could see them kneeling in the chapel of Spain, their doublets glittered as they passed beneath the flamboyant ogives... They embodied the beauty of past times and remained, in some measure, the beauty of the present in the little sleeping town. One thought of them inevitably as one took one's way across the peaceful streets to the drowsy little harbour.

The sea had gradually gone back since their time. The sand, covered with sea-buckthorns, had surrounded their walls like another sea. The walls had crumbled to pieces, the pointed light-house of count Guy built in pale coloured bricks had remained standing at the edge of the channel, left forlorn like a pensive witness and the channel had stretched out across the dunes mournful and stubborn, lined with slanting trees. From the harbour one could see them swept by the wind following the course of the canals and rivers which, from the depths of the docks go to the heart of Flanders. The wharf remained deserted. A briny smell pervaded it at high tide... And indeed still pervades it in spite of all, with the wind of mourning



and the wind of glory, at that hour when the unwary traveller lingers on the ashes of this town which contained no master-piece of art but which itself was a poem in grey and gold, a melancholy grave-yard.

\* \* \*

The charm of Dixmude was of a very different nature. On first arriving a freshening breeze cooled your heart. This little town on a slight elevation on the sloping banks of the Yser, whence soared, around the high steeple, slender slate-covered turrets, seemed as ethereal as a spirit. And from the little flowery nunnery, on the outskirts of the town which gently followed the little deserted canals to leave them soon in the softly undulating meadows, this freshness lingered like a young maid's kiss. Yet this little town was so old, so secluded, so tenderly silent that, rising from the night of ages, she seemed to cling to the light of spring. Every where the paradox was repeated in a thousand different ways : the houses with their cracked walls had well washed windows with clean starched curtains, the aged gardens were over grown with wisteria and the grass which grew between the stone of the alleys did not seem to be the lasting sign of dull weariness but the persistence of life.

Save for a building here and there with redant gables,—which are called Spanish in Flanders and Flemish in Spain—the houses had no particular style, they were simple and square with hospitable door-ways and red roofs browned with age. But they mingled so harmoniously with the whole, leaning towards one another that, mellowed by the damp atmosphere and misty sunshine, they seemed to have existed from

times immemorial. The miracle of this harmonious blending was so imperceptible, so gentle at Dixmude that the gothic town-hall, built on the market-place less than half a century ago, seemed almost contemporary with the venerable church rising on tiptoe behind it, the better to watch over the town.

Joardens reigned in this church. Above the high altar his most dazzling colours mingled with the misty azure of the incense. Whas has befallen to his “Adoration of the Magi”? Has it been rent by iron or shrivelled by the flames? Does it still lie crushed beneath the crumbling stones of the altar, the ruins of the tabernacle which rose at the entrance of the chancel, graceful and tapering, beneath the heaped up remains of the rood-loft of white stone rendered transparent by the fret work of the boldest chisel and standing at the top of the aisle seemed to hang like a light veil to dim the burning flame of the famous picture?

Seen from the banks of the Yser where our trenches lie what a tragic silhouette Dixmude offers, uncrowned, mutilated and charred! One thinks of the canal of Handzaeme which flowed along the Parrot's inn to lap the sides of the charming house of the Castilian governors and whose gentle life has been painted by Gi'soul! One wonders what is standing of the curious prison whose façade resembled that of a peaceful convent, what has happened to the nunnery, the white house of the “Grande Demoiselle” and the little church placed slant wise at the back of the court-yard amongst the lilac bushes and the roses.

The German expert who follows with methodical exactitude the incen-



LÉON CASSEL — THE FERRYMAN'S HOUSE ON THE YSER AND YPERLEE  
A HISTORICAL HOUSE (PICTURE)



RUINS OF THE FERRYMAN'S HOUSE





*Belonging to H. R. H. the Countess of Flanders.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — THE YSER AT DIXMUDE (PICTURE)



*Ph. Paul Becker.*

*Belonging to M<sup>me</sup> Le Marinel.*

VICTOR GILSOUL — OLD HOUSES OF DIXMUDE, A QUARTER OF THE TOWN ENTIRELY DESTROYED (PICTURE)

diary and who draws up his report of the works of art destroyed will notify that save for the Joardens, a masterpiece duly catalogued, there is nothing worth regretting at Dixmude—a town which the professors of architecture have not classified and whose buildings have not been written down and numbered in their manuals! Woe to him who only understand a marked and ticketed beauty! The essential charm of a little town, its touching aspect, its silence, the perfect accord of its stones and spirit, the traditional line of its houses, its works of art, the natural offspring of the soil which have become, necessary to the harmony of the whole, all this escapes him. And in the same way he will fail to realize the stern beauty of the large Renaissance farms, built outside the city, with their huge barns, their traditional form, the dwelling-house rising above the other buildings—these lovely farms of which the most perfect specimen is that of Bogaerde spreading at its ease yonder, between the dunes and the meadows, not far from Furnes. All these have been destroyed.

\* \* \*

But even a German archeologist could not help admiring on the market-place of Furnes. Before the outrage of the bombs it formed one of the most beautiful architectural ensemble in the world. There were only a few houses that were not famous. It had not the lofty gilded charm of the market-place of Brussels—nor the splendour most proud and tender of Ypres, that sublime ruin, nor the melancholy poetry of Bruges but it had a more intimate charm which was in keeping with the humble little town, making it complete and

perfect without depriving it of its simplicity. Picture to yourself a large square place lined with shops of grey brick ending in gables rising in tiers, with tiny columns and garlands round the windows. On right and left at the corners of the streets stood buildings of exquisite loveliness. And close by, above the roofs, two churches gazed at one another, Saint-Nicolas with the square tower, and Sainte-Walburge which was hardly more than a gothic chancel pointing skywards like a shrine.

At the foot of this latter, beneath a charming belfrey, were the Law-Courts built by Sylvanus Boulin in 1613, containing the chapel of la Chatellenie with its beautiful rood-loft of carved oak. A fine portait of Louis XIV hung over the large mantel-piece of Jerome Stalpaert in the entrance Hall. An ancient door opened out of this hall into the reception rooms of the Town-Hall, hung with Cordovan leather.

This town-hall, which with the Law-Courts, occupies one corner of the square, opened its dark door on to a graceful flight of steps with columns. Built in 1596 it consisted of a single gable; a second similar one was added some twenty years later and a witty inscription, *coronabor augendo* answered from the top of the new building to the pompous *finis coronat opus* which crowned the original façade. With the varied designs carved on its yellow brickwalls, with its turret ending in a light slate-covered bulb, with its doorway opening on to a picturesque court-yard, where the peasants on market days, took out their horses from their gigs, this unpretentious building had a peerless charm. It was the same at the other end of the square with the old inn of the Golden



Apple which in the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century became the house of the Spanish officers and the House of the Noble Rose (the first one hit by the bombs) which had still retained its original destination and where the archduchess Isabel had already dined beneath the mantel of an ancient fire-place. The Meat-Market, the picturesque guard-house, opposite the Town-Hall at the corner of the apple-market, the beautiful Pelican's House with delicate brick mullions... one after another they must be named and lovingly described all these houses of the square built without any general plan and yet so alike in their naive spontaneity.

You ought above all to read again with pious delight, the curious novel so young and fresh, in which Camille Lemonnier has told minutely the mystic tale of the town. "*Le petit homme de Dieu*" was the best guide for the poet who passed that way. It still remains so for the dreamer who would evoke to-day that humble glorious city. His pen revives and notes with precision all the details of this fair scene. After having read this book one cannot kiss the sacred stones of the ruins without feeling a soul adorable and pure welling up beneath one's lips.

Those who have not known the sweet and living Furnes, those who have not left the shadow of Saint-Nicolas and wandered in the deserted alleys beside the little convents and the large gardens, and the tiny squares where an

undefinable something seemed ever about to die in the silence, those who have not loitered along the old boulevards lined with canals and hedges; those who have not lingered in the doorways, at the entrance of the inn-yards, at the mysterious cross-roads have not known this innocent town in all its heart-rending beauty. From the outskirts of the suburbs, the windows of the taverns, country-roads, from the blind alleys, from every where one could see grouped differently, framed differently standing in different lights the three towers of the market-place of which one was square as faith, the second ethereal as love, and the third lofty as hope.

Does the latter still rise with its pointed spire above the chancel of Sainte-Walburge, has it not fallen through the roofing of fine slates, into the bombed church among the choir-stalls of Urbain Taillebert, the statues of the Renaissance, the Christ of the brotherhood to which on the day of their admission, the youths of Furnes bound themselves with an ancient cord. And what has become of the quaintly carved stations representing the life of Christ which penitents in their brown cowls still carried through the streets even as late as the 29<sup>th</sup> of July in the traditional procession whilst already along the roads of Germany rolled the sacrilegious cannons which were to kill from afar that which should never have died.

Pierre NOTHOMB.





CH. FOUQUERAY

RUINS OF THE VILLAGE OF RAMSCAPELL. GUARDED BY FRENCH INFANTRY (WATER-COLOUR)



CH. FOUQUERAY

RUINS OF THE CHURCH, PERVYSE (WATER-COLOUR)





TOWER OF THE CHURCH OF DIXMUDE  
AFTER THE FIRST BOMBARDMENT



*Ph. Commandant Laurens.*

NIEUPORT — RUINS OF THE CHURCH



*Ph. Capt Gérard.*

RENINGHE — THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH  
DESTROYED



*Ph. Capt Gérard.*

RENINGHE  
ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE CHURCH



## LAMPERNISSE

AT a turning of the road where the high trees are swept by the sea-blast rises the fierce, massive tower of Lampernisse.

It looks like a sentry posted in advance, on the battle-field. Beyond it you see the boundless plain of the Yser with its heaps of ruins overtopped here and there by the jagged outline of a ruined steeple. Once these were towns and villages, Nieuport, Dixmude, Pervyse, Ramscappelle, Oostkerke — names which were unknown but yesterday and are famous now. The red roofs and white walls of the farms stand out against the emerald green of the meadows. Rows of trees thinned and lopped mark the roads leading to the country occupied by the enemy. The flooded district gleams in the distance like a mirror blue or grey according to the changing aspects of the boundless sky. Moving spots are constantly formed by the white or black smoke of the shells. The cannon roars close at hand or muffled by distance. Yet in the damp pastures the cows are peacefully chewing the cud.

In front of its church which has been ripped open, in the midst of its graveyard that has been devastated, among the poor ruined houses of the village the tower of Lampernisse calls up the figure

of Niobe standing lonely, threatening amidst her children's corpses.

Alone it has remained almost untouched, hardly chipped by the shots which continually raged about it.

It is typical of those old brick towers of the coast, flanked with massive counterforts, on which abuts the turret of a spiral stair-case, with high ogive windows, crowned by a slated steeple around which cluster tiny conical turrets.

It is the rustic expression of that proud architecture of which the Drapers' Hall at Ypres were once the most admirable specimen and which in civil and religious buildings remind us of the warlike character of the great communal period.

A warlike tower which seemed foredoomed to the attacks it had to suffer.

Its surroundings are intensely tragic. The little church-yard is desolate beyond words. You stride over rubbish and trunks of trees. Piled up confusedly in the huge funnels hollowed out by the shells, the humble broken crosses lie beside the bones and coffins which have been smashed to pieces.

Near the graves of the country-folk those of the soldiers, who have lately fallen on the field of honour are tenderly decked with flowers and adorned with designs made of bits of broken stones and bricks.



In one of them lie no less than forty-two Alpine riflemen killed by one shell treacherously fired a dark December night through the lateral aisle of the church.

You enter the tower by a high ogive door. The ribs of the vault, that form a narthex on which the stairs of the tower and the small lodge of the baptistery open out, weigh on pendants ornamented with heads naively carved. One of them, a youth with curly hair, is of an excellent style reminding us of that of the admirable butt-ends of beams of the XV<sup>th</sup> century which came from Ypres and were to be seen at the Exhibition in Ghent in 1913.

The narthex opens directly into the church by an elevated arch barred by the rood-loft and the organ dating from the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century.

The main part of the building, flanked with narrow aisles, stretches out in three equal aisles higher and lighter, projecting laterally like a transept. Thus dimness and light alternate all the more strikingly in the present shattered condition of the church.

The arches of the balustrade are supported by massive stone pillars with roughly carved capitals, with crushed and flattened outline which go back to the XIV<sup>th</sup> century.

The vaults are of wood left uncovered, borne up by corbels naively decorated. Whereas the lateral aisles break off suddenly, a polygonal apsis is added to the central aisle, between the two sacristies.

The fatal shell of December which ripped open the right aisle and overthrew one of the pillars was followed by others which broke the roof, shattered the stained-glass windows to pieces,

tore off the wainscoting and the confessionals.

All this was pathetically heaped up on the flags strewn with straw stained with the blood of the victims, and with the remains of their outfit...

Alone the little pulpit, saved since then, stood up in ironical defiance to German barbarousness; the pulpit whence words of peace and brotherly love were so often heard.

In spite of restorers, who did not fail to daub the vaults and ornament the choir with a neo-gothic altar and some abominable statues painted in many colours, the nave had kept the congenial character of the old Flemish churches.

The stormy days of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century, the horrors of which are thrown into the shade by those of the present war, had robbed them of their ornaments and furniture. New ones had to be got in their stead, and the following generations did their best to give back to the temples their former splendour.

Hence a result jarring yet picturesque, which horrifies State architects who admit nothing save unity of style, but in which artists and poets delight. The church is indeed the house of all, of every age and faith reveals itself therein ever living and vigorous.

So, in my opinion, the redundancy of these baroque altars with their heavy columns, overloaded capitals and grand draperies harmonize perfectly with the slender Gothic severity. Some rustic Rubens ornamented them; but as well as the gorgeous altars at Antwerp and Ghent they celebrate, in a humbler tone, the triumphant, theatrical catholicism which, handled in a masterly way by the Jesuits, exerted itself, in the

## LAMPERNISSE

XVII<sup>th</sup> century, to heal the painful wounds and lull the deluded hopes.

Likewise rustic hutch-makers endeavoured to cover the cold walls with oaken wainscoting and confessionals. Beneath the chisel of the Flemish peasant the elegant French scroll patterns have assumed a coloured strength which is not without a certain charm. To the pillars are hung gilt wooden torch-bearers, the lozenge-shaped obits of the lords of that part of the country. The Virgin with her heavy velvet brocade mantle and her fine lace veil shines gloriously in the light of the candles and of the gilt-paper flowers.

Picture to yourself women with black mantles kneeling on the straw chairs and you will see the mystic and peaceful aspect assumed in happier times by the church of Lampernisse now destroyed.

It boasted of a famous Christ, which I hope has been saved, and which was probably exhibited at the "Petit Palais" with the other relics of the Yser country.

In one of the aisles stands a pseudo-gothic monument erected about fifty years ago in memory of the glorious fishmonger Zannekin who fell heroically on Mount Cassel, on August 23, 1328, at the head of his communal militia. His cenotaph hallows the neighbouring graves of our humble soldiers who died for their native land on the battle-fields of the Yser.

It is in Lampernisse, that little village with its sweet-sounding name, that Charles de Coster placed the epilogue of his epic work, so dear to us Belgians. It recalls our bloody struggles of the XVI<sup>th</sup> century and will be henceforth all the dearer to us.

One day the priest, the beadle, the alderman, notary and grave-digger, all the religious and civil authorities of Lampernisse found, lying in a neighbouring field the naked lifeless bodies of Uylenspiegel,—embodying the resistance of Flanders against Spanish tyranny—and of Nele, his little friend.

They were about to burry them in hallowed ground when the hero recovered his senses and proudly exclaimed « Does it lie in man's power to bury Nele and Uylenspiegel the very heart and spirit of Flanders our motherland? »

A patch of ravaged land is all that remains to us of our motherland. Its towns and villages are nothing but smoking ruins and yet many people cling to them unable to make up their minds to deserte them. Facing the foe our soldiers look passionately towards the East, far beyond their trenches, far beyond the Yser... away to Flanders their captive mother, awaiting deliverance at their hands.

Jean DE MOT,

*Curator of the Musée du Cinquantenaire  
of Brussels.*







# THE CRIMINALS AT THE PILLORY



*IN a remarkable book which has just been published under the title : The German cruelties, M. Maccas, doctor of law of the University of Athens, after enumerating according to the evidence and official documents, the crimes committed in Belgium and in France by the German troops, makes out a list, which is already long, of the chiefs who must be considered as responsible. This nomenclature was necessary. The criminals must be pilloried ! It is a first satisfaction given to the imperious exigences of the universal conscience.*

*Journal des Débats (may 23 1915).*

The preface of **The German cruelties** has been written by M. Paul Girard, of the French Institute. The eminent professor at the Faculty of Letters introduces the work in the following terms : « This new book on the way in which Germany understands and carries on war has been written by a neutral, which would be enough to secure our sympathy. It is, moreover, composed with method, well documented, sober and of an evident good-faith ; and such evident qualities cannot but obtain the esteem, not only of the French public, but of all those, whatever their nationality, who will have sufficient curiosity to read or only peruse it with unprejudiced eyes. »

In these tragic hours, it is a duty to read M. Maccas' list of accusations.

In presence of such obvious facts, the reader will realize how right the author of the preface is when he condemns the Germans, who have at present « introduced into war a new law and a new morality, both obviously opposed to the notion that Mankind had of these great principles and to the tendencies which urged, and are still urging it, to seek for means of alleviating the sufferings and lawful horrors caused by war among civilised

nations » ; against enemies who seem to have done their utmost, on every occasion and under every form, to make a wrongful use of force ; against a nation that signed certain declarations, tending to soften as far as possible the rigours of war, and, having become one of the belligerents, « takes no heed of these declarations ». In presence of such facts, proved beyond a doubt, he will understand how justified is M. Girard's conclusion, when he exclaims : « Out of all this, Hatred alone can spring, a tenacious, indefatigable hatred, which neither Peace nor Victory will extinguish..... If Hatred lives on, piously kept up, stirred up by the sacred fire of Memory, it will be impossible for those who have provoked it to be ever in security ; it is the flaw which threatens with sudden destruction the steel that appears the strongest..... Woe to the nation that has brought hatred upon itself ! »

Among the sixteen chapters of this book, we shall only dwell to-day on that of *Responsibilities*. M. Maccas affirms in it that in the present war the German officer's soul has revealed itself as essentially criminal. « Our own enquiries », he writes, « and the careful study we have made of the subject,



*Ph. Meurisse.*

PERVYSE — THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT



*Ph. H. de Hemptine.*

OUDEKAPPELLE — RUINS OF THE CHURCH





*Ph. H. de Hemptine.*

LAMPERNISSE — THE TOWER, BEFORE ITS DESTRUCTION



*Ph. Capt. Gérard*

LAMPERNISSE — THE INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH

## THE CRIMINALS AT THE PILLORY

allow us to say that the French Committee of Inquiry is absolutely right when they maintain that *the highest personalities of the Commandment themselves, shall bear before Mankind the overwhelming responsibility of the crimes committed by the German Army.* »

This assertion is followed by a list of fifty-six names of officers and sub-officers of the Teutonic troops, guilty of crimes amenable to the commonlaw. We only give here the names of the accused whose crimes were committed *within the Belgian frontiers*, placing first, according to the order adopted by M. Maccas, the Prince in whose name « so many crimes have been perpetrated ».

1. **The Emperor William II**(1).—Addressing his troops, on the eve of the battle of the Vistula, the Emperor William himself uttered these words which announce and sum up all the atrocities that have been committed : « Woe to the vanquished ! The Victor knows no mercy ! »

3. **Prince Eltel Friedrich, son to the German Emperor.**—The prince stayed for a week at a country-seat near Liège. The owner was there. In the presence of his hosts, the prince had all the dresses that could be found in the wardrobes of the mistress of the house and her daughters, carefully packed up and carried away.

4. **The Duke of Brunswick.**—The prince took part in the plundering of the same country-seat near Liège.

6. **Marshal Von der Goltz**, military Governor of Belgium.—In an order signed by him and posted up on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October, at Brussels, the Marshal condemned to death the inhabitants, whether guilty or not, living in the neighbourhood of the places where the telegraph-wires would be cut or the railway destroyed.

7. **General Von Bulow**, commander in chief of the 2<sup>d</sup> German army.—This general ordered the first bombardment of Reims. On the 22<sup>d</sup> of August, after the ransacking of Andennes, he ordered the following notice

to be posted up : « *It is with my consent that the general in chief ordered the whole locality to be burnt, and that about a hundred persons were shot.* » On the 25<sup>th</sup> of August, at Namur, another proclamation in his own hand was issued ; it ran as follows : « The Belgian and French soldiers must be handed over as prisoners of war, before 4 o'clock, at the prison-gate. The citizens who refuse to obey shall be condemned to hard-labour for life in Germany. The houses shall be carefully searched. The search shall begin at 4 o'clock. Any soldier who is found shall be shot immediately. Arms, powder, dynamite must be delivered at 4 o'clock, Punishment : Death. All the streets shall be occupied by German guards, who shall take ten hostages in each street. If any Outrage is committed in the street, the hostages will be shot.

19. **General Sixtus Von Arnim**, commanding the 4<sup>th</sup> Army corps—Levied a monstrous war tax of 500 million francs on the city of Brussels and the province of Brabant.

20. **General Von Bissing**, commanding the 7<sup>th</sup> Army corps.—In a proclamation to his troops, in Belgium, he said that : « when civilians dare to fire at us *the innocent must perish with the guilty* » ; that « the German Authorities have repeatedly said in their communications to the troops, that, in the repression of such deeds, human lives must not be spared ; » that « no doubt it is to be deplored that houses, thriving villages and even whole towns should be destroyed ; nevertheless *we must not yield to feelings of pity which would be out of place ;—all this is not worth the life of a single German soldier.* »

21. **General Von Doehm**, commanding the 9<sup>th</sup> Army corps.—When an American journalist (attached to the World) told him that he and M. Gibson secretary to the legation of the United-States at Brussels, had seen mutilated corpses of women and children at Louvain, the General answered that such incidents inevitably happened in street-fights. The American journalist observed that the feet and hands of a woman's body were cut off ; that an old man's body had received 22 bayonet wounds in the face ; that another had been found, hanged by the hands at a beam in his

(1) The numbers preceding the names are those of M. Léon Maccas' book.



own house, and that he had been burnt alive by means of a fire lighted under him. General Von Doehn contented himself with answering that he was not responsible for these facts.

22. **Baron von Mirbach.**—Took part with Prince Eitel-Friedrich and the Duke of Brunswick in the ransacking of a country-seat near Liège.

23. **The Duke of Gronau.**—A country-seat, at Villers-Notre-Dame, in Belgium, being occupied by his staff, he himself ordered 146 spoons and forks, 236 silver-gilt tea-spoons, 3 gold-watches, 62 hens, 32 ducks, evening dresses, works of art and a great quantity of child's underclothing, to be taken and sent to Germany.

36. **Lieutenant-colonel Blegen.**—Ordered the massacres and ransacking of Dinant.

37. **Major Botzwitz.**—Ordered his troops to kill the wounded and murder the prisoners of war.

38. **Major Manteuffel.**—Ordered the destruction of Louvain and the horrible atrocities that were committed there.

39. **Major Sommerfeld.**—Ordered the destruction of Termonde.

43. **Major von Bulow.**—Ordered the massacres and destruction of Aershot.

44. **Major Dieckmann.**—In a proclamation dated september 6 (Grivegnée, Belgium), declares that if the population does not preserve a peaceful attitude under every circumstance the hostages shall be put to death; and that if each of the first forty hostages is not replaced by another within 48 hours, *the hostage will suffer the penalty of death; and that whoever does not obey the order « Hands up! » will suffer the penalty of death.* »

54. **The German officer Walter Blœm.**—Entrusted with an inquiry in Belgium (see the

Gazette of Cologne, Feb. 10-1915) he confessed without shame that all that had been done was part of a system based on the following principle that « *the whole collectivity to which the culprit belongs must expiate the deed* »; and that « *if the culprits cannot be pointed out, the innocent must expiate in their place, not because a crime has been committed, but in order to prevent another crime from being committed afterwards.* »

Should not the press of all the allied Nations demand the immediate nomination of an international tribunal to judge and condemn by default—as the Figaro suggests—all these criminals of common law.

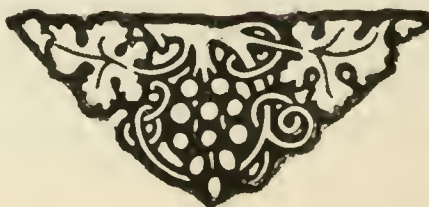
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We cannot conclude better than by quoting here the conclusion of the Author of « The German Cruelties ».

« In consequence, the theoretical responsibility of the German atrocities », writes M. L. Maccas, « lies directly with the military writers of Germany, and more especially, and so far as the causes are concerned, with her Professors, Historians and Philosophers; but, ranking first among the executors, the military chiefs come next. »

« Nevertheless, the general verdict condemns all Germany; for all her citizens, from the first to the last, appear before the World, first astonished, then revolted, as jointly answerable for the work of devastation, murder, pillage and villany which will mark out, in the eyes of History, the war which Germany has let loose. »

« As for us, at least, who are of a neutral nationality and judge impartially, we consider them all as responsible, so deep are the contempt and disgust with which they inspire our indignant hearts, and so severe, but so just is the sentence they have deserved from our bitterly disappointed reason. »



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